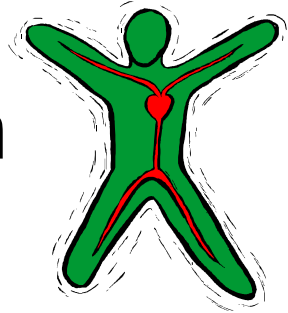


## Antagonism & Artery Health

**H**ostile and competitive behavior can increase the risk of cardiovascular disease, heart attacks, and strokes by contributing to a thickening of the artery walls in your neck. Research participants who were considered hostile and competitive under stress showed a greater thickening of the artery walls in their necks compared to those who were more agreeable, more understanding, and able to go with the flow. Being cynical, distrustful, manipulative, and quick to anger is a health risk. The recommendation is to reduce stress and also to examine our personal reactions to it as a key strategy in reducing its potential to cause lasting harm. Take charge of your reflexes in response to stress and you may ward off cardiovascular problems while increasing your ability to handle more stress.

Source: *Hypertension Magazine*, "Trait Antagonism and the Progression of Arterial Thickening," August 16, 2010.



## Is Your Music Player Making You Deaf?

**A** recent study by the Center of Advancing Health has shown that listening to a personal audio player at high volumes for extended periods of time may cause significant hearing loss. The 24-year-long study observed over 8,700 girls between 1985 and 2008. A tripling of hearing problems occurred among these girls over this period of time. Of those who experienced increased hearing problems, 99.7% had used audio players.

Source: *Health Behavior News Service, Research News*, August 31, 2010.



## Are You Nuts for Salt?

**R**educe your sodium intake and your heart will thank you.

Although salt is a vital mineral and required in your diet, too much of it can contribute to hypertension, stroke, heart failure, kidney problems, and osteoporosis. Food labels often list "sodium" instead of salt, which is actually sodium chloride. The Food and Drug Administration says you should not exceed a teaspoon of salt per day, which is about 2300 mg. Most people unwittingly use far more. An instant soup packet contains 40% of the daily recommended limit. Many fast foods contain 50% of this amount. Try herbs and spices instead to flavor your meals.

More information at <http://www.fda.gov/ForConsumers/>

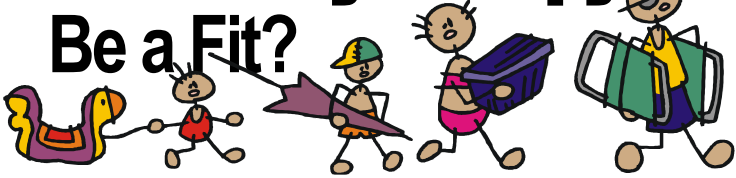


## Military Website for Psychological Health

**T**he U.S. Department of Defense operates a website dedicated to psychological health. The Defense Centers of Excellence for Psychological Health and Traumatic Brain Injury website (<http://www.dcoe.health.mil/>) "assesses, validates, oversees, and facilitates prevention, resilience, identification, treatment, outreach, rehabilitation, and reintegration programs for psychological health and traumatic brain injury to ensure the Department of Defense meets the needs of the nation's military communities, warriors and families." If you are active duty, a concerned person, or a professional, look into this rich resource of help whose key purpose is helping service personnel with "invisible" wounds of war like post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD).



## Could Family Therapy Be a Fit?



**F**amily Therapy is an approach to professional counseling that involves the whole family or at least a few members. Participants meet with the family therapist to resolve problems they share. A family is a system. When one member struggles with a problem others are naturally affected. This systems approach to therapy is very effective, possibly even more than when individuals are treated separately. Family Therapy allows participants to discover new insights about how they influence each other and to acquire skills they can apply to future problems. If you think Family Therapy might be worth trying, contact the Employee Assistance Program, your medical provider, or an association of family therapists. The benefits of Family Therapy can be numerous and lead to a happier life for your family in the years ahead.

More information at <http://www.aamft.org>

## Planning for Successful Performance



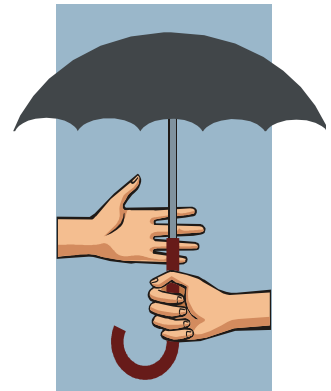
**D**on't undermine your success following an energizing discussion with your supervisor about this year's coming performance expectations. Avoid these common syndromes: 1) "*Head-in-the-Sand*." Weeks or months into the year, you feel uncertain about work expectations. A reluctance to ask for clarification leads to a larger problem. Solution: communicate early on with your supervisor to get clarity on tasks if necessary, and continue when you know you're on the right track; 2) "*One-Way Street*." You expect your supervisor to initiate all communication. If it doesn't happen, you remain silent, hoping for the best. Solution: silence is not golden in the workplace. If your supervisor does not provide feedback during the year, ask for it. You'll avoid unpleasant surprises at year-end.

## Getting Comfortable with Public Speaking



**T**ry these tips to feel influential as a public speaker: 1) After being introduced, don't dive into your notes too fast. Instead, begin with an engaging and authentic story about your topic while making eye contact with your audience. You'll establish a "presence" and a connection that your audience wants with you; 2) Don't be afraid to raise a provocative or controversial opinion. Doing so will cause your audience to feel the time spent was worth it; and 3) Search the internet for "speech tips." Watch a few pros and look for things great speakers have in common. These are teachable tactics. Model them in front of a mirror, and you will multiply your effectiveness at your next presentation.

## Stopping the "Us vs. Them" Mentality



**D**oes an "us versus them" mentality exist in your workplace? This mind-set can undermine productivity and job satisfaction. To reclaim a more harmonious workplace, agree to the following: 1) stop using words like "you guys," and "your division". Instead, use "we" and "our" in your discussions; 2) focus on shared goals such as increasing consumer satisfaction, improving efficiency, and decreasing work stress; 3) meet regularly to discuss your progress in overcoming the "we versus them" mentality, and don't stop discussing this issue until lasting change is achieved; and 4) ask plenty of "what" and "how" questions to help brainstorm ways to create harmony. Caution: avoid "why do you" or "why did your group do this or that" questions. Such questions sound accusatory and can rekindle distrust.